

STATINTL

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WALTER SCOTT'S Personality Parade

Q I read that Roscoe Hillenkoetter, the first director of our Central Intelligence Agency, died at age 85 in Weehawken, N.J. I've never heard of this guy. Have you?—Mark Williamson, Renton, Wash.

A Vice Adm. Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter was President Truman's choice to be our first CIA director. A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, Class of '20, he served as a naval attaché in Spain and Portugal before being sent to Vichy France, where, as naval attaché, he secretly worked with the French underground. After World War II, he was given command of the battleship "Missouri," which he led on a series of show-the-flag trips.

On May 1, 1947, Truman appointed him head of the newly organized CIA. Three years later, when the Korean war erupted so unexpectedly, the Senate Appropriations Committee asked Hillenkoetter why the U.S. had been caught off-guard. Not long after this grilling, Hillenkoetter asked Truman to return him to sea duty, which Truman did. Hillenkoetter retired in 1957 and landed a job as chief executive officer of the American Banner Lines.

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